

## Bluets

*See the slate gravestone:  
Seventeen-twenty-nine.*

*The tail of the seven was drawn  
    with chalk  
then carved.  
A death's head at the top,  
an egg-shaped sexless face,  
with pointed chin,  
a face the stonecutter drew.  
In the side panels, weeping willows,  
their branches crowded downward.*

*See the shallow carvings  
in this country deathplace  
far from mausoleums and wax wreaths,  
the only flowers bluets.*

*This leaning slate  
marks a deacon's grave:  
his thirteen children,  
his wives,  
their Old Testament names incised,  
names unused for a century,  
charms against damnation.*

*died in infancy  
died in infancy  
died in infancy*

*Children in calico  
sucking painted toys.*

**--Gloria Kenison**

*Newtonville, Mass.*